

VZCZCXRO9341  
OO RUEHDT RUEHPB  
DE RUEHJA #0732/01 1170305  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 270305Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2200  
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 7887  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 0183  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000732

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/ANP, EAP/RSP  
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: PAPUA -- ICRC WORKS TO RENEGOTIATE AGREEMENT WITH  
GOI

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is working with the GOI to renegotiate its operational agreement for activities in the restive region of Papua in eastern Indonesia. Pending the outcome of the discussions which focus on whether the ICRC should have field offices in addition to its Jakarta office, the ICRC has decided to close its office in Jayapura, the administrative capital of Papua. The ICRC says the planned closure of the office has nothing to do with GOI concern about prison visits in the region. We have urged the GOI to work constructively with the ICRC to resolve the matter. END SUMMARY.

#### TRYING TO RENEGOTIATE AGREEMENT

¶2. (C) The ICRC is working with the GOI to renegotiate its operational agreement for activities in Indonesia. Pending the outcome of the discussions which focus on whether the ICRC should have field offices in addition to its Jakarta head office, the ICRC has decided to close its office in Jayapura, the region's capital. ICRC country director Vincent Nicod told poloff that the organization's Jakarta headquarters would remain in operation. (Note: The Jayapura office also covers other parts of eastern Indonesia, including the Moluccas and Sulawesi. ICRC officials had previously decided to close its office in Aceh following the end of the conflict there.)

¶3. (C) Efforts to renegotiate the agreement governing the ICRC's Indonesia operations have moved slowly. The organization currently operates under a 1977 agreement on detainee visits and a 1987 accord that established the ICRC's Jakarta office. (Note: The previous agreements do not explicitly mention establishment of ICRC field offices in various parts of Indonesia.)

¶4. (C) In 2000, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) requested that the ICRC negotiate a new agreement governing its operations. DEPLU held that the older agreements, negotiated under previous authoritarian governments, were not suitable for democratic Indonesia. ICRC officials asserted the agreements were not time-bound and still provided a sufficient legal basis for the organization's operations, including maintaining field offices. Nevertheless, the ICRC agreed to pursue a new comprehensive agreement.

#### GOI-ICRC RELATIONS STILL SOLID

¶5. (C) Media reports that the planned closure came because of ICRC visits to separatist prisoners in Papua are untrue, according to Nicod. (Note: Papua has been the site of low-level separatist militancy since the territory officially

became part of Indonesia in 1969.) ICRC staff did regularly visit imprisoned anti-Jakarta activists, in addition to other prisoners. However, this did not trigger the GOI's call for the closure of the Jayapura office. The ICRC had hoped to close the Jayapura office quietly and to press the GOI to conclude a new agreement as soon as possible. However, local Papuan activists had brought the closure to the attention of the media and asserted that the closure was result of visiting separatist elements in prison. Nicod called these reports an "unfortunate politicization" of the ICRC's work.

¶16. (C) The ICRC has an excellent working relationship with the military, police and prison officials in Papua. Nicod told poloff that the ICRC rarely had difficulties gaining access to prisoners in the province. The organization also helps improve prison conditions in Papua through support of sanitation, health and other welfare programs. The police and military have welcomed the ICRC's human rights training. ICRC officials plan to continue their activities in Papua working from their office in Jakarta, although it will more difficult and more expensive.

#### DISCUSSING MATTER WITH GOI

¶17. (C) ICRC officials have asked Jakarta-based diplomatic missions to urge the GOI to conclude a new agreement on the organization's activities as soon as possible. Officers from a number of embassies plan to meet ICRC officials next week to discuss next steps. Norwegian Embassy contacts told us they expected the matter to come up during Norway's annual Human Rights Dialogue with Indonesia this week. (Note: FM Wirajuda will travel to Oslo for the dialogue.)

JAKARTA 00000732 002 OF 002

¶18. (C) Poloff inquired about the matter with Cicilia Rusdiharini, DEPLU's Deputy Director for North American Affairs, on April 24. He underscored the important role that the ICRC performs in disaster relief and promoting compliance with international humanitarian law. Poloff urged Indonesia to work constructively with the ICRC to resolve the matter. Rusdiharini took our points on board.

HUME